



The Megaphone



May 30, 2001

An organ of the Rascals Rogues and Rapsallions

Number 11

Lair 1, 2001 Planner

Know ye all Rascals that the meeting dates for the rest of the year are as follows:

June 9 - The Mass Challenge

September 8 - The George Challenge

December 1 - Avoidance of Election as Officers, Challenge Victim to be determined

If a picnic is to be perpetrated, a date will be announced

Following our normal disgraceful tradition, our officers were selected primarily through the use of a Press Gang. Those bearing the Cross of Authority for 2001 are:

Keeper of the Humidor: Lee Wolfson, elected unanimously

Archivist: Ron DiOrio, elected unanimously

Treasurer: Vic Norman, elected unanimously

Secretary: Tim Esaias, elected by sufficient plurality

Assistant Director: Woody Cunningham [after considerable arm-twisting and some outright bribery] elected Unanimously & Gratefully.

Lair 1 Mass Challenge

On June 9, any Rascal or Rascal guest may take up the gauntlet of proposing the Rascal Lair #1 Mascot of the Third Common Millennium. Each contestant must find a creature, either animal, plant or (most appropriately) a fungi, whose scientific name (i.e. Linnaean taxonomic designation) has the same initials as the contestant. (For example, Vladimir Neaplagonitis tells me that he has chosen *Vampirus nefariosis* as his mascot-designee.) Each contestant will have five minutes to woo and win.

Under-Age Shots

The Challenge was splendiferously met by Jeff Brooks, who gave a wonderful, if freely imagined, account of the life of Frank Piano who was shot by his father for hanging out with the wrong crowd. He learned his lesson, we learned, but still paid a price for his delinquent ways. First, in over-compensation, he became a priest, which is a stiff penalty in itself. He led a distinguished and exemplary life, only to die in his later years from a movement of the bullet his father had so lovingly interjected into his person. It was a moral tale, and quite satisfyingly ironic. Certain cynics in the audience claimed to have documentary evidence that Frank Piano had, in fact, died of his wounds, but they were shouted down, and forced to relocate to Lair #3.

Jeff has clearly earned the status of Rogue. We look forward to his completion of a particularly painful Rogue's Challenge sometime in the current century.

Ball 2001

Dan Morrison reporting

The Ball Committee (Edmonds, Norman, Wolfson, Kortas) outdid themselves, and 24 Rascals and friends attended the Seventh Annual Rascals Ball which was held at the Chatham Village club house on February 10, 2001. Dinner was a Hawaiian buffet and Dennis Looney gave a review of the 2000 RR&R season. Director Bob Edmunds presented the J. Z. Landgraf Prize to Lee Wolfson, who donned his purple satin garb and read his acceptance speech in Italian, Dennis Looney providing translation. Tim Esaias was announced as the winner of the

Rascal o' the Year trophy and received the trophy with such good grace as he could muster. Following the program, there was Hawaiian dancing and music.

First Font of Wisdom

We owe thanks to Ron DiOrio for answering all of Lair #1's nagging questions in one challenge on a memorable Saturday night in March. He dealt with them in chronological order as follows:

Q: What was the first recipe for beer? Was it mead? Can we have a homemade sample?

A: Beer had ancient, and probably multiple, origins. As soon as some forager left grain out in the heat and rain long enough to ferment, brewing would have been invented.

The first documented reference to beer comes from the epic of Gilgamesh. It indicates that savage man, thanks to a prostitute hired by Gilgamesh, was civilized after being introduced to beer (among other things). This led to an all-too-brief digression into the role of temple prostitutes in the ancient world, especially the book of Genesis, and the resulting negative connotations that the Greeks and Romans held toward Phoenicians.

Ron suggested that it would be unethical to serve us any brew he made, since his religious persuasion would prevent him from testing it. Besides, the beer of ancient Mesopotamia was relatively nasty and had to be sipped from its urn through 6 foot straws. On the other hand, Mead, a drink brewed from honey, was made more uniformly but required much longer fermentation periods. Furthermore, neither

recipe was amenable to natural fermentation until the summer months. Ron did, however, purchase some bottled mead for us, and after a digression into British naval history, mixed us some grog in a wash bucket.

Q: Who is responsible for the theft (on July 8, 1872) and subsequent return of Langley's telescope lens?

A: Nobody was ever named. The lens was returned directly to Langley, and he never disclosed the means by which it was returned. One theory suggests that the thief was a disgruntled colleague who was jealous that Langley, who was Pitt's first full research professor, was not required to teach any classes.

Incidentally, the history of astronomy is riddled with petty theft. Evidently Galileo stole the idea for his telescope from a lens crafter who tried to patent the thing. The lens crafter in turn stole the idea from some kids who, by properly aligning some of his discarded glass managed to entertain themselves by spying on distant objects.

Q: What ever happened to the Echo II satellite?

A: This was actually a huge mylar balloon launched by NASA in the early 70's. Some of our more senior rascals remember looking for it in the evening skies. It was tracked until its disintegration.

Q: What is the story behind the "Nothing Happened Here" plaque outside Poli's restaurant?

A: The owner of the restaurant had to delay its construction while special equipment was brought in to anchor its foundation. The builders left a massive granite stone that was somehow part of that costly (but probably unnecessary) process. To commemorate the efforts of the contractor on that day, the owner

installed a plaque in honor of the futility of it all. On that same date, or possibly on a completely different date when the Echo II was launched, some truckers from West Virginia broke through the barricades on the Fort Pitt Tunnel, but wrecked their vehicle on the side of the tunnel (which was still under construction). Had they not been stopped, their vehicle could have careened down the parkway into Squirrel Hill, ultimately crashing into the recently constructed Poli's restaurant.

Odds and Ends

Bob Edmunds selected a different menu for us, which included ham, baked cod, roast beef, and plenty of colorful veggies. I, for one, went back for seconds.

Also, Lee Wolfson played video excerpts of the Rascal's Luau/Ball, it was his first attempt at using i-Video software. It was so successful that the waitress at Max's said she now sees us all in a new light!

Mark Miller's photos were on display at Valhalla for the entire month of March. Those of us who died in battle before or during March quite enjoyed them.

To round off the evening, we dimmed the lights and had Woody Cunningham tell us a ghost story.

Lair #3

The doings of Lair #3 are mysterious and obscure. We know that they were founded under the watchful eye of our Designated Examiners (Charles George and Timons Esaias), who made the difficult and dangerous journey across the Alleghenies to Doylestown-on-Don for the Inaugural Meeting, whereat Dan Morrison regaled the assembled Rascals-in-Waiting with the complex tale of the Hendershot "fuelless" aircraft engine. We also know that they have seduced Dan Morrison

away from us, probably with an offer of shorter travel times and less obviously skeptical receptions of his various stories and tales.

Travelers have given us a partial list of their officers, but it is much to be doubted. They insist that Lair #3 is getting along without a Director, which would seem both highly irregular and unlikely. Actual Rascals would most certainly not hesitate to seize power if it were just lying about to be taken. Also, under the rules, there would be no-one to run their meetings if they had no Director. However, Eastern Pennsylvania being lacking in many appurtenances of civilization, it may simply be that they know no better.

Their alleged officers are:
 Director – Anonymous or lacking altogether
 Assistant Director – Gary Frazier
 Secretary – Peter Zaremba
 Treasurer – Carl Halter
 Archivist – Anonymous or obscure
 Keeper of the Humidor – Michael Moscherosch

It is also asserted, with equal unreliability, that their first meeting was a Mass Challenge. This would be brave, bold and admirable - if true. Those who make this assertion claim that it was held on February 3, 2001 at the Maennerchor Society, Doylestown. Rascals were challenged to present an interesting story from the day they were born, minus 100 years. Winner of the J.Z.Landgraf prize was Daniel Krewson, or so goes the story. Runner-up is said to have been Michael Moscherosch.

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Rascal Events For 2001

Lair 1 officers for 2001:

Director - Bob Edmunds
Assistant Director - Woody Cunningham
Secretary - Tim Esaias
Treasurer - Vic Norman
Archivist - Ron DiOrio
Keeper of the Humidor - Lee Wolfson

Lair 1:

Rascals Ball:

February 10

Quarterly Meetings:

March 10
June 9
September 8
December 1.

Lair 3:

First Quarterly Meeting:

February 3.

The Lair 1 Secretary requests that we "Please make note of them in a secret location where wives and SOs cannot find them and deliberately schedule something else."

The Lair 1 Archivist, along with The General Secretary requests that you verify the accounting of events as recorded in the ether on <http://www.geocities.com/ephorate/>.

The purses of both lairs request that 2001 dues be sent to your respective treasurers in the form of check payable to Rascals Rogues and RapsCALLIONS to:

Lair 1 Treasurer: Vic Norman, 9347 Almar Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15237.

Lair 3 Interim Treasurer: Dan Morrison, 158 East Oakland Ave, Doylestown, PA 18901

Hot Flash!!

This Just In

Doylestown, PA (DMNS) The second quarter 2001 meeting of Lair No. 3 was an success. Our new digs in the Doylestown Moose Lodge struck a perfect combination of privacy, decor and cuisine [I hear you snickering, but that's the God's honest truth].

Michael Moscherosch lead the group of 15 Rascals and friends who had assembled in lessons in playing the didgeridoo. Everyone went home with their own didg to practice on.

Next meeting of Lair No. 3 is, I believe, August 4, the first Saturday of that august month, at which Peter Marino, friend of Lee Wolfson, will present some obscure and dark tale from Norristown, Pa. The exact nature of his presentation is not yet known. More details at a later date.

I think Lair No. 3 make a quantum leap forward with this past meeting and I think our future looks bright. A total of 8 Rascals were present and 7 guests.

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